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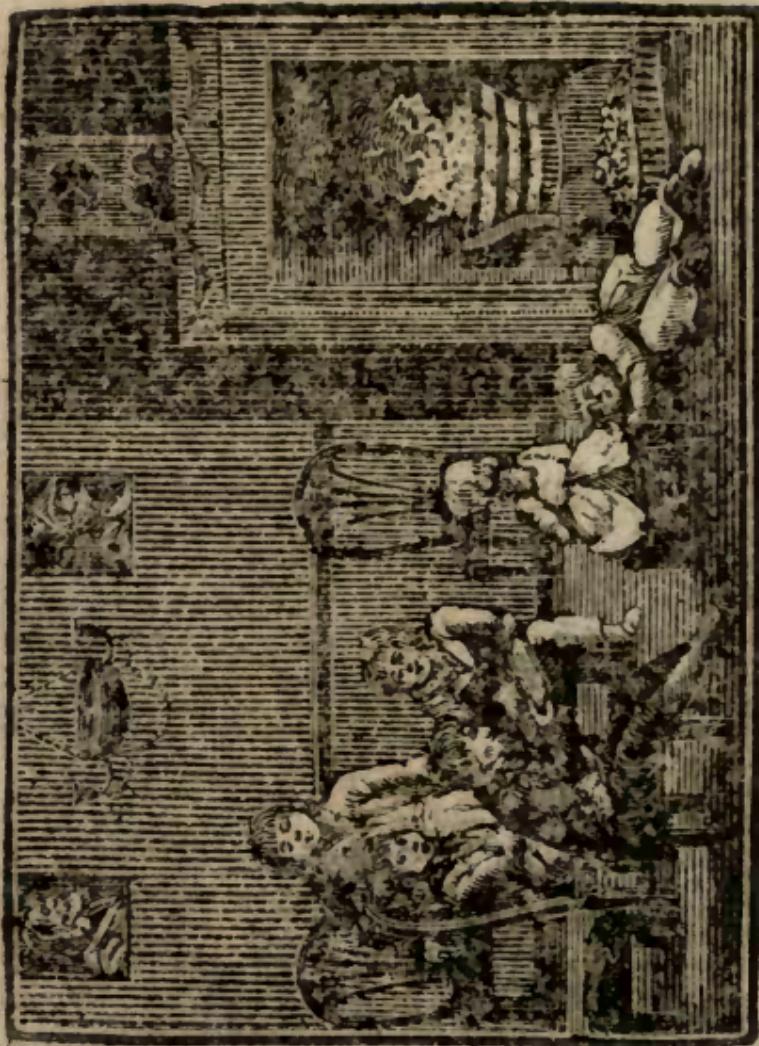
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Mary Hatchel

1804



The Happy Family.



THE
HAPPY FAMILY:

OR,

Winter Evenings' Employment.

CONSISTING OF

READINGS AND CONVERSATIONS,

In Seven Parts.

—
By A FRIEND OF YOUTH.
—

WITH CUTS BY BEWICK.



“O snatch your offspring from adding to the number of those objects
“of supreme commiseration, who seek their happiness in doing nothing.”

HANNAH MORE.

YORK:

Printed by and for T. WILSON and R. SPENCE,
High-Ousegate. 1801.

(PRICE ONE SHILLING.)

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PREFACE.

TO represent TIME as valuable; STUDY amusing and profitable; INTEGRITY indispensable; VIRTUE amiable; and the paths of RELIGION, as the ways of pleasantness; is the plan of this little work; and to draw the attention of young minds to these important views, is the motive for publishing it. Should the work prove successful but in a single instance, my labour will be rewarded.

I have enriched my little volume with passages from a number of admired authors; particularly from the late incomparable work of Hannah More*. In selecting from this author, I risk being classed amongit the "*beauty mongers*" of the day; as, indeed, it is scarcely possible to select a line

* *Strictures on the Modern System of Education*, by Hannah More.

from that book, where the reader, if he has any discernment, will not discover a *beauty*. When I make extracts from this work, in order to illustrate my subject, particularly when that subject happens to be religious education, it is because no other author supplies me with sentiments, which I deem so well adapted to my purpose. And I shall fail exceedingly in my design if the reader does not find in these passages, some things that may lead him to examine the work from which they are selected. There he will find not only beauty and elegance—but treasures of infinitely greater importance.

If I have borrowed a few tints from the most successful Artists that have ever painted the advantages of early reflection, I trust I shall be forgiven. I have done so in the hope that, by applying those bright touches, which cannot fail to attract, the whole of my little composition may be recommended to the observation of those, for whose amusement and edification it was designed by

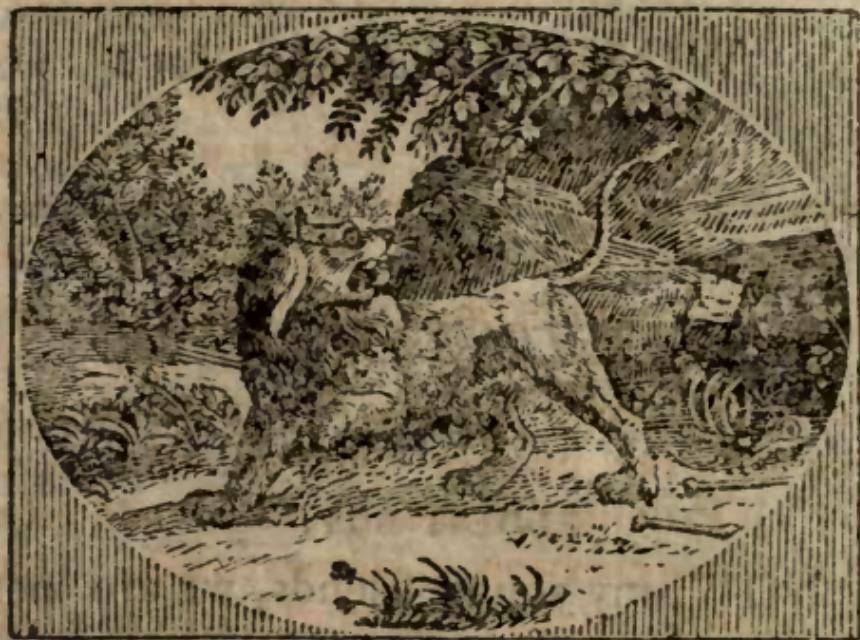
A FRIEND OF YOUTH.

WINTER TALES, &c.

THE FIRST EVENING.

ELDEST BOY.

NOW, my young friends, we are met together for our amusement, let us form some regular plan of proceeding. I am the eldest of the company, therefore I propose that we all sit round this cheerful fire, and read some entertaining stories out of the little book which has just been presented to us. This book, it appears, has been written by one who is a Friend of Youth: that being the case, we may expect to find something in it to entertain us; and, perhaps, while it makes us merry, it may also make us wise; and, what is more, may tend to make us good; and that, I have heard my father say an hundred times, will certainly make us happy.



We are here presented with a short description of that noble animal the Lion: but before I begin to read, in order to engage your attention, you shall see the beautiful picture which is here placed at the top; and as we perhaps may hear a great deal concerning this fierce looking animal, we shall, by viewing his portrait, the better understand what sort of a creature he is.

THE LION.

This animal is produced in Africa; he reigns the sole master of the deserts his

rage is tremendous, his courage undaunted, and his roaring horrible. His mane is large and shaggy, and he is of a tawny colour ; his strength is great : and yet for all this strength and fierceness, becoming once acquainted with man, and the power of his arms, he loses his natural fortitude, and is terrified even at the sound of the voice of his keeper. Such is the superiority of reason over instinct—such is the power which Providence hath given to man over the whole creation. However tame these creatures appear, we ought not to trust their savage nature too far. I will tell you a little story about one of these animals.

STORY OF A LION.

A Gentleman once kept in his chamber a Lion, which he supposed to be quite tame ; and his servant, who used to feed and attend it, as is usual, mixed blows with caresses. This ill-judged association continued for some time. One morning, however, the gentleman was awakened by an unusual noise in the room ; and drawing his curtains, he perceived it to proceed from the Lion ; which was growling over

the unhappy man, whom it had just killed, and had separated his head from his body:

This story the younger part of my readers should keep in mind ; it may be the means of saving you a hand or an arm. You will perhaps frequently see those fierce animals, either at the Tower of London, or at Mr. Pidcock's, or carried about the country in iron cages : you will see their keepers play with them and caress them ; and because you observe in the animal a sullen composure, which you mistake for gentleness, you may approach too near the grate, and attempt to touch them ; but be aware of doing so ; remember the Lion in the chamber ; he may at that very time be watching an opportunity to seize you ; and the loss of an arm would be paying dearly indeed for your curiosity. Many accounts assure us that the anger of the Lion is noble, its courage magnanimous, and its temper susceptible of grateful impressions. This may be ; but we have seen how little these noble qualities are to be depended upon : and when there is no good to be done, or glory to be gained, it is certainly safe, prudent, and commendable to avoid

danger ; and at all times proper to keep at a distance from bad company.

As the Lion is remarkable for his strength and fierceness, so is the Mouse for its weakness and timidity. But to show you how the strong and hardy may be sometimes obliged to the weak and timid for their preservation—and, indeed, how the high and mighty may occasionally be dependent upon the meek and lowly ; or the rich and prosperous saved by the charitable assistance of the humble and grateful ; I will here insert a little fable of—

A LION CAUGHT IN A NET.

A little, timid Mouse was amusing itself by picking up a few grains of rice, which had escaped the hand of the gleaner, and were scattered on the ground ; without observing a tremendous Lion who had sought this shady place, and stretched himself out to repose. The little animal caught the Lion's attention. He gently laid his paw upon the mouse ; which, in an agony of fear, in the most pitiable language, implored his mercy, and begged him to spare the life of an object so incon-

siderable as he must appear in the eyes of his majesty.—“ Go,” says the Lion, “ I did not intend to hurt thee; but keep this lesson in thy mind, when any one is helping himself to that which is the property of another, there may be an eye upon him that he suspects not.” The Lion released his little prisoner, who went away rejoicing at the clemency shown him by his royal master.

It happened a little while after this, that the Lion, who was prowling amidst some thickets in the dead of night, fell into a snare, a net of strong cords, which had been spread for the purpose. Finding himself thus ensnared, and unable to extricate himself, he soon made the woods resound with the most horrible roaring. It was in vain he strove to untie the knots which held him: the more he applied his strength, the more firmly they were bound together.

His cries at length reached the ear of his little friend the Mouse, whom he had so lately set at liberty. The voice was well remembered by the little animal; and without stopping to consider in what way

so insignificant a creature as he could serve so great a personage, or what risk he would run of meeting his destruction if he approached the Lion whilst thus enraged, he ran with all his swiftness to the place ; impelled by gratitude and a sense of duty, he disdained all fear. He soon saw in what condition the Lion was in.—“Despair not,” says he ; “cease to shake the earth with this terrible roaring : be still, and suffer me to apply the means that occur to me for your deliverance.” He immediately fell to work, and soon, with his sharp teeth, gnawed away the principal knots by which the Lion had been confined, so that he could easily shake off the net. “Now,” says this little knight errant, “your majesty will please to walk forth ; and let this lesson teach you, that a charitable action done in secret, seldom fails to be rewarded.”

There is a pretty story told of a Lion, which, if true, serves to show that he in his turn, is capable of gratitude. It is as follows :

There was a traveller who lost himself

in a forest: it was almost night; and having spied a cave, he went in to stay till the next day: but a moment afterwards, he saw a Lion coming towards the cave. The man was in a great fright, and thought that the Lion was going to devour him. The Lion walked on three feet, and held up the fourth; he came thus to the traveller, and shewed him his paw, in which there was a large thorn; the man took out the thorn, and having torn his pocket handkerchief, wrapped the Lion's paw in it. This animal, by way of thanking him, fawned upon him like a dog, did him no harm, and the next day the man went his way. Some years after, the man, for some crime he had committed, was condemned to be torn by wild beasts. When he was in a place called the Arena, they let out against him a furious Lion, which at first run at him to devour him: but when he came near the man, he stopped to look at him; and knowing him to be the same who had taken the thorn cut of his foot, he went up to him, moving his head and tail, to show the pleasure he had in seeing him again. The emperor was very much

surprised at this sight; and, having ordered the man to be brought to him, he asked him if he knew the Lion; the criminal gave him an account of the adventure, and the emperor pardoned him.

There is not a more pleasing exercise of the mind than gratitude. It is accompanied with such inward satisfaction, that the duty is sufficiently rewarded by the performance. It is not like the practice of many other virtues, difficult and painful, but attended with so much pleasure, that were there no positive command which enjoined it, nor any recompence laid up for it hereafter,—a generous mind would indulge in it for the natural gratification that accompanies it. If gratitude is due from man to man, how much more from man to his Maker? The Supreme Being does not only confer upon us those bounties which proceed more immediately from his hand, but even those benefits which are conveyed to us by others.—Every blessing we enjoy, by what means soever it may be derived, is the gift of Him

who is the great Author of Good and Father of Mercies.

ELDEST BOY.

The Evening is now pretty far advanced, and I think we cannot leave off at a better place. I must own the delight I feel in those charming reflections ; they will for ever be impressed on my mind, and I hope they will also be impressed upon your minds. We should be ungrateful to the Author of this little book, which has already afforded us so much entertainment, if we did not make a proper application of those virtuous sentiments.—How indeed can we close the evening better, than by expressing our thanks to the Father of all Mercies, through whose kind providence we have been rendered so happy this night, and from whom we have received so many, many blessings.

THE SECOND EVENING.

ELDEST BOY.

WELCOME, my little brothers, sisters, friends!—with pleasure I meet you again, to renew our Evening's Conversation, and proceed in our entertaining and instructive little book. Here it is—



“Am I not a Friend and a Brother?”

On opening the part which contains the second evening's reading, I observe

the picture of a Negro: poor fellow, he seems to be in great distress.—Hand him round before I begin to read concerning him.

ELIZA.—(6 YEARS OLD.)

O! what a disagreeable black looking creature! I never saw any thing so frightful; and all hung about with chains, I declare: I dare say he fancies himself my Lord Mayor, or some such fine man. I have no patience with such conceited things: and only see what faces he makes; most likely all this finery is very painful to him. It reminds me of our Margery, the cook, who was such a silly thing as to go the other day and have her ears bored; she came back making such faces as this. Mother told her that “pride was painful;” and I really think both Margery and this black man would look quite as well without having bits of brass wires hanging at their ears.

ELDEST BOY.

What you say of Margery may be very proper; but what you say of the poor

black man serves to show how very cautious we should be in forming our judgment of persons by their outward appearance, and of being too hasty to condemn. This is the portrait of a poor negro slave, who has been dragged from his country, his connexions, and his friends. Perhaps an affectionate husband and a tender father, whose hapless family are bemoaning his lot in some remote corner of the world; or who may, by this time, be loaded with chains, and under the tyranny of some cruel task-master, obliged to lead a life of slavery like his, in order that such as you may have sugar to your tea, and your tarts made sweet and palatable. Now there is little Harry, with his pink and white cheeks, and his sparkling eyes, suppose some great rough looking man was to come and steal him away, and carry him into some distant country, and when he was able to work, load him with chains, as if he was a cart-horse. Would it not have cost you many a sorrowful thought, many a deep sigh, when you reflected that your brother was torn from you, and so cruelly treated? we will suppose him carried away into a far

distant clime, where some little girl may say, "O! what a disagreeable *red and white* looking creature!—how frightful!"—This poor black man is the work of the same Creator as you are. There is, to be sure, a very great difference in the colour of your skins; but as neither were of your own making, so neither of you have any business to be proud of the difference, nor to despise each other on account of it. He is a poor miserable creature, and deserves all our compassion; and so do all his wretched race.

EDWARD—(EIGHT YEARS OLD.)

You have said so much about this poor Negro, it makes me love him better than if he was white. I could look on his picture, and reflect on his forlorn condition, until I shed tears over it.

ELIZA.

I'm so sorry to think that I should be so naughty as to call him names, I could cry too. I wish I could take these ugly chains, and tear them link from link; and could raise him up from his knees, I would kiss

him, and tell him, that though I was so silly to call him names, *I did not mean to hurt him.* And when he saw my tears, I think he would believe me.

ELDEST BOY.

It was spoken like a young Christian ; and with such energy, that I cannot doubt its sincerity. Perhaps if older Christians than we were to come to a resolution to break the fetters, to emancipate and kindly raise up these poor afflicted fellow-creatures, who are so sorely burthened, they would feel a more exquisite sensation than they had ever before experienced.

A traveller relates, that “ in walking through a slave-yard, he saw a man about thirty-five years old, in irons ; he was a Mahometan, and could read and write Arabic. He was occasionally noisy ; sometimes he would sing a melancholy song, then he would utter an earnest prayer, and then perhaps would observe a dead silence.” [This, by the way, I take to be the very man whose picture is here exhibited.] “ I asked the reason of this strange conduct, and learned that it was

in consequence of his strong feelings on his having been just put, for the first time, in irons. I believe he had begun to wear them only the day before. As we passed, he cried aloud to us, and endeavoured to hold up his irons to our view, which he struck with his hand in a very expressive manner, the tear starting in his eye. He seemed by his manner to be demanding the cause of his confinement.—How affecting!—for a man in the prime of life to be bound in irons, and perhaps doomed to endure all the hardships and cruelties, which it is well known are practised upon these poor men; and left to ask, perhaps in vain, of the remorseless master, “What is the cause of this?—What has been my crime? Wherein have I offended?”—I trust there is not one of my young readers whose heart would not melt with compassion at the sight of this poor innocent sufferer, were they to see him, in a supplicating posture, with tears in his eyes, calling out to them,

“ *Am I not a Friend and a Brother?*”

What an appeal to the human heart!—Before I dismiss the subject, you shall have

a specimen of the *tenderness* of those men-dealers.

“ The captain of an American slave-ship had lost a very fine slave ; he died of *the sulks*, as he emphatically termed it. The following were his words, as near as the person who related the fact could remember—“ The man (he said) was a Mahometan, and uncommonly well made, and it appeared to me, that he had been some person of consequence. When he first came on board, he was very much cast down ; but on finding that I allowed him to walk at large, he got a little more reconciled to the ship. When the number of my slaves grew to be such that I could not let them have their liberty any longer, I put this man in irons like the rest, and upon this his spirits sunk down again to such a degree, that he never recovered it. He complained of a *pain at his heart*, and would not eat. The usual means were tried with him, but it seemed all in vain, for he continued to reject food altogether, except when I stood by him, and made him eat. I left no method untried with him ; for I had set my heart on saving him. I am

persuaded he would have brought me three hundred dollars in the West Indies ; but nothing would succeed. He said from the first he was determined to die, and accordingly so he did, after lingering for the space of nine days. I assure you, Gentlemen, I felt very sorry on the occasion, for I dare say I lost three hundred dollars by his death ; and, to such a man as me, that is a very heavy loss !”

This is the compassionate language of a slave-merchant. What must this poor African have endured ? Surely this was dying of grief—torn from all that was dear to him in life—he would have struggled with the miserable reverse of his fortune with heroic fortitude—but chains—to laden an afflicted creature like this with chains—no !—he *could not* bear that !—HE DIED !!!

“ Such, I exclaim, is the pitiless part,
Some act by the delicate mind ;
Regardless of wounding, or breaking a heart,
Already to sorrow resign’d.”

He without whose permission “ not a sparrow falls to the ground, and who feedeth the young ravens that call upon him,”

will not suffer the meanest work of his hands to be treated cruelly with impunity. I remember some most beautiful lines on this subject written by that excellent poet, Cowper. With his permission, I will borrow a few of them for your gratification.

“ Oh! most degrading of all ills that wait
On man, a mourner in his best estate!
All other sorrows virtue may endure,
And find submission more than half a cure;
Grief is itself a med’cine, and below’d
To improve the fortitude that bears the load;
To teach the wand’rer, as his woes increase,
The path of Wisdom, all whose paths are peace.
But Slav’ry! Virtue dreads it, as her grave,
Patience itself is meanness in the slave;
Or if the will and sovereignty of God
Bid suffer it a while, and kiss the rod,
Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,
And snap the chain the moment when you may.
Oh! ’tis a godlike privilege to save,
And he who scorns it, is himself a slave.

* * * * * * * * * *
A Briton knows, or if he knows it not,
The scripture plac’d within his reach, he ought,
That souls have no discriminating hue,
Alike important in their Maker’s view:
That none are free from blemish since the fall,
And Love Divine has paid one price for all.

The wretch that works, and weeps without relief,
Has one that notices his silent grief ;
He from whose hands alone all power proceeds,
Ranks its abuse amongst the foulest deeds,
Considers *all* injustice with a frown,
But *marks* the man who treads his fellow down,
Remember, Heav'n has an avenging rod ;
To smite the poor, is treason against God."

I believe the hour of rest draws nigh :
we will therefore separate for the evening ; bearing in our minds the sufferings
which have been described, we shall not
fail to commiserate the wretched, whilst
we are rendered more truly sensible of
the peculiar blessings bestowed upon us
by the gracious hand of Providence.

THE THIRD EVENING.

ELDEST BOY.

OUR last evening's reading presented us with a melancholy story, and even excited our tears; I hope we may now find, by way of contrast, something pleasant, to produce a smile, as the little elegant song says,

“ The tear that is wip'd with a little address,
“ May be follow'd, perhaps, by a smile.”

THE THIRD EVENING's READING.

INTEMPERANCE AND DISSIPATION.

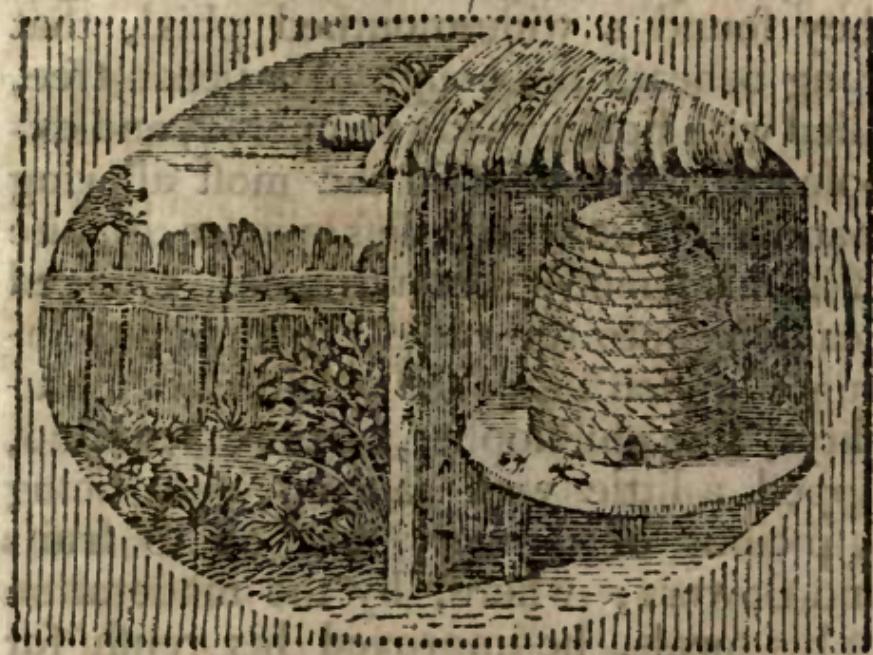
The nearest approach thou canst make to happiness on this side the grave, is to enjoy from heaven understanding and health. These blessings if thou possessest, and wouldst preserve to old age, avoid the allurements of Voluptuousness, and fly from her temptations.

When she spreadeth her delicacies on the board, when the wine sparkleth in the cup, when she smileth upon thee, and persuadeth thee to be joyful and happy; then is the hour of danger, then let Reason stand firmly on her guard; for if thou hearkenest unto the words of her adversary, thou art deceived and betrayed.

The joy which she promiseth, changeth to madness, and her enjoyments lead on to diseases and death.

I remember having met with a story, which shows the force of these observations. I think it was called

THE TWO BEES.



On a fine morning in May, two bees set forward in quest of honey ; the one wise and temperate, the other careless and extravagant. They soon arrived at a garden enriched with aromatic herbs, the most fragrant flowers, and the most delicious fruits. They regaled themselves for a time on the various dainties that were spread before them ; the one loading his thighs at intervals with provisions for the

hive against the distant winter, the other revelling in sweets, without regarding any thing but present gratification. At length they found a wide-mouthed phial, that hung beneath the bough of a peach-tree, filled with honey ready tempered, and exposed to their taste in the most alluring manner. The thoughtless epicure, in spite of all his friend's remonstrances, plunged headlong into the vessel, resolving to indulge himself in all the pleasures of sensuality. The philosopher, on the other hand, sipped a little with caution; but being suspicious of danger, flew off to fruits and flowers; where, by the moderation of his meals, he improved his relish for the true enjoyment of them. In the evening, however, he called upon his friend, to inquire whether he would return to the hive, but found him surfeited in sweets, which he was as unable to leave, as to enjoy. Clogged in his wings, enfeebled in his feet, and his whole frame totally enervated; he was but just able to bid his friends adieu, and to lament, with his latest breath, that though a taste of pleasure might quicken the relish of life, an

unrestrained indulgence is inevitable destruction.

You will find the moral of this little fable proved by daily experience, even amongst yourselves, my young friends ; the excessive indulgence of your appetites in fruits or sweets, or the too eager pursuit of play or pleasure generally, if not always, ends in remorse. The former producing loathing and sickness, prevents your application to your studies, and deprives you of the real enjoyments intended for you in the hours of recreation : the latter takes up too great a portion of your time, dissipates the mind, and equally renders you unfit for application, whilst you are suffering under the displeasure of an offended tutor. These are real evils to youth ; but they are only the beginning of sorrows ; if not timely checked, they will grow up with you, increase in strength, and the disorder which at first was painful and inconvenient, will in the end prove destructive. It is surprising to behold what infinitely various paths mankind take

in pursuit of pleasure, and yet how few appear really to obtain it ; all are in full cry after this will-o'-the-wisp—from the all-accomplished Duchefs at a masquerade, to the little flirting heroine of a “ baby ball”—pell-mell they go !—

Who is she that with graceful steps, and with a lively air, trips over-yonder plain ?

The rose blusheth in her cheeks, the sweetness of the morning breathes from her lips ; joy, tempered with innocence and modesty, sparkleth in her eyes, and from the cheerfulness of her heart, she singeth as she walks !

Her name is **HEALTH** ; she is the daughter of Exercise and Temperance ; their sons inhabit the mountains of the northern regions.

They are brave, active, and lively, and partake of all the beauties of their sister.

Vigour stringeth their nerves, strength dwelleth in their bones, and labour is their delight all the day long.

To combat the passions is their delight ; to conquer evil habits their glory.

Their pleasures are moderate, and therefore they endure; their repose is short, but sound and undisturbed——

Enter JONAS, the Butler.

Here is little Miss Lætitia Airy, call'd upon you, ladies and gentlemen.

O, desire her to walk in.

Enter Miss LÆTITIA.

O la, I am so happy to see you, how comfortably you are all set round the fire; I declare it's quite charming. For my part, I am an absolute slave; I have really no time for reading, or thinking, or walking, or sitting still, or any thing; I'm sure I shall be glad when this ball is over; but my 'ma has set her heart upon my making a figure there, and so has papa; and it's one's duty, I suppose, to please papa and mama, when one can, without doing any thing *very* disagreeable to one's selves, you know. I'm sure I have been six hours with Monsieur Molini, the French dancing-master, this day; but he gives me great encouragement; he says there is not any one young lady he has the honour to teach

who can stand on one toe so gracefully, or for so long together.

LITTLE EDWARD.

Miss Letty, I should like to see you stand upon one foot, and repeat the second commandment.

LÆTITIA.

Lo, you little conceited thing, I know nothing about commandments ; 'Ma gives particular orders that I am not to be commanded by any body, nor contradicted neither ; she says papa has plenty of money for me, and I shall do just as I please, as long as I live.

EDWARD.

I don't believe she can repeat it, if she stands upon both feet.

ELDEST BOY, (*aside to Edward.*)

That, brother Ned, is entirely *her misfortune*, though perhaps not entirely her fault, and it is not becoming in you to scoff at the misfortunes of any one.—I would

not have you be offended at what little Edward said to you, Miss Letty, he is but a child. And though I really do think it is a grievous thing for a young lady, nine years old, not to be acquainted with *all the ten commandments*, yet there was something very improper in his behaviour on the occasion.

LÆTITIA.

Nobody dare behave so to me at home: but, however, I must be gone; I see by my watch it is near seven o'clock, and if I stay any longer, I shall have dinner waiting for me: and I must not sit long over the wine either; for, do you know, I shall have an alteration to make in my dress for the evening; we are going to have a party, *en famille*, and there are to be several of the officers of this new regiment, so we shall be as gay as possible.—Well adieu! *Bon jour*—I'm sorry to leave you so soon; but, really, *time is precious*. [Exit.

ELDEST BOY.

Miss Lætitia's fine speech ended with a truth however; though, knowing the

value of this precious gift, time, she is most exceedingly careless of it, I must confess. We have great reason to rejoice, who can relish “the simply joys and unbought delights” which surround us, without the excessive fatigue poor Lætitia is forced to endure in the attainment of her more fashionable pleasures. She is exactly one of those Lilliputian coquettes mentioned in that excellent book we saw upon the table in father’s library the other day. I could not resist copying out two or three lines which struck my fancy as I opened it. I hope both my father and Miss Hannah More will forgive me if I have done wrong :

“ The true pleasures of childhood are cheap and natural; for every object teems with delight to eyes and hearts new to the enjoyment of life; nay, the hearts of healthy children abound with a general disposition to mirth and joyfulness, even without a specific object to excite it; like our first parent, in the world’s first spring, when all was new, and fresh, and gay about him,

“ They live and move,
And feel that they are happier than they know.”

This is a description of our little happy society. How thankful should we be for this peculiar happiness, that God hath placed us under the care of parents who see and provide for us the things belonging to our peace; and yet strew in our ways so many innocent gratifications.

Miss Lætitia is gone to dinner. It is so long since we have dined, that I suspect it is almost bed-time for most of you, and time to retire for all. We closed the book with some very excellent sentences, let us bear them in our minds.

“ Our pleasures are moderate, therefore they may endure; our repose is short but sound, and undisturbed.”

THE FOURTH EVENING.

THE FOURTH EVENING's READING.



“ OH Winter! ruler of th’ inverted year,
 Thy scatter’d hair with sleet like ashes fill’d,
 Thy breath congeal’d upon thy lips, thy cheeks
 Fring’d with a beard made white with other snows
 Than those of age ; thy forehead wrapt in clouds,
 A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
 A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
 But urg’d by storms along its slipp’ry way,

*I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
And dreaded as thou art.*

I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturb'd retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted evening know.

Come, Evening, once again, season of peace,
Return, sweet Evening, and continue long!"

ELDEST BOY.

Come, we open the evening's amusement with a most beautiful description of fire-side enjoyments; let us avail ourselves of those which now present themselves. We seem to be much more happily situated than the poor old man in the picture above; I wish he was amongst us, he seems half perished in the storm.

I am to inform you, that the subjects intended for the present evening, are,

SINCERITY AND TRUTH.

With their Opposites.

"Sincerity and Truth form the basis of every virtue. That darkness of charac-

ter, where we can see no heart ; those foldings of art, through which no native affection is allowed to penetrate, present an object, unamiable in every season of life, but particularly odious in youth. If, at an age when the heart is warm, when the emotions are strong, and when nature is expected to show herself free and open, you can already smile and deceive, what are we to look for when you shall be longer hackneyed in the ways of men. Diffimulation in youth is the fore-runner of perfidy in old age. Its first appearance is the fatal omen of growing depravity and future shame. It degrades parts and learning, obscures the lustre of every accomplishment, and sinks you into contempt with God and man. As you value, therefore, the approbation of Heaven, or the esteem of the world, cultivate the love of truth. In all your proceedings be direct and consistent. Ingenuity and candour possess the most powerful charm ; they bespeak universal favour, and carry an apology for almost every failing. The path of truth is a plain and safe path ; that of falsehood is a perplexing maze. After the first de-

parture from sincerity, it is not in your power to stop. One artifice unavoidably leads on to another, till, as the intricacy of the labyrinth increases, you are left entangled in your own snare. Deceit discovers a little mind, which stops at temporary expedients, without rising to comprehensive views of conduct. It is the resource of one who wants courage to avow his designs, or to rest upon himself, whereas openness of character displays that generous boldness which ought to distinguish youth.

“ To set out in the world with no other principle than a crafty attention to interest, betokens one who is destined for creeping through the inferior walks of life ; but to give an early preference to honour above gain, when they stand in competition ; to despise every advantage which cannot be attained without dishonest arts ; to brook no meanness, and to stoop to no dissimulation, are the indications of a *great mind*, the prefages of future eminence, and distinction in life. At the same time, this virtuous sincerity is perfectly consistent with the most prudent vigilance and cau-

tion. It is opposed to cunning, not to true wisdom. It is not the simplicity of a weak and improvident, but the candour of an enlarged and noble mind ; of one who scorns deceit, because he accounts it both base and unprofitable, and who seeks no disguise, because he needs none to hide him."

So preaches the admirable Blair ; and I pray, my young friends, that you may bring those valuable precepts into practice.

I shall endeavour to amuse you by a story, the subject of a little drama, in the works of M. Berquin ; with an intent to show that those who are walking in the paths of error and deceit are sure, sooner or later, to be caught in their own snare.

HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.

The Countess of D. had invited Harry and Eliza, a nobleman's younger son, and his daughter, to pass the day at her house with her own children, Augustus and Julia, together with Gabriel, Lucian, and Flora, three friends who lived in the neighbourhood.

In the absence of the Countess, this young party had got possession of several dozens of silver counters, which were highly valued by the Countess, and her orders had been peremptorily given, that her children should not have them to play with. Master Harry, however, got hold of them; and, in spite of all that Julia could say, who offered at the same time her own ivory ones, he would have them out to play with, telling her they always had as good, or better at home. He took them himself out of the drawer; and having thrown them about the room, and behaved in a very rude, unbecoming manner for some time, he proposed going to play in the garden.

Rachel, one of the servants, passing through the room where they had been playing, was astonished to see her lady's valued counters thrown about. She gathered them up; and, in order to prevent all mistakes, counted them over and over again, but could only make fifty-four—there ought, she knew, to be five dozen—six were wanting. Rachel was greatly concerned at this accident, and expected

to be blamed by her lady, at least as being accessory in giving them out. The Countess enters, asks the cause of her uneasiness, and is told of the loss of the six counters. At this time Julia enters the room: the Countess is angry with her for taking out the counters; when, with a composure and artless simplicity which proved her own innocence, she related the facts which have been stated concerning them. The maid suspected some of the young visitors, and recommended that Master's pockets should be examined. The Countess reproved her for the thought of offering such an affront to their parents as that would be, and Julia endeavoured to exculpate the whole party. The strictest search was made, but none of the six counters could be found. Adam, a faithful old servant, is called into court; but he can give no account of them; he has not seen them. After some deliberation, however, Adam undertakes to find the thief: provided he might have leave to put his own plan in execution, he had no doubt of producing the counters. The Countess, knowing his prudence, at length

consented to this ; and Adam went to get his conjuring sticks and other matters ready.

The young family were all assembled together, when Adam's experiment was to be made. It may not be amiss to give the short scene of the drama which precedes the examination.

SCENE III.

THE QUARREL !

The Countess. Well, how fares it with you all, my little friends ? I am glad to see you here.

Harry. Miss Julia has just now informed us you have lost six counters of the number we unluckily were playing with. I'm sorry for it ; but could never thing your Ladyship would have suspected that one of us had taken them. At least I can assure you for my sister and myself, that we know nothing of them.

The Countess. I could not possibly suspect such well-bred children. Sure Julia did not say I suspected you.

Eliza. No, my Lady, all she said was to inquire if we had brought them out through inattention.

The Countess. Which you might very innocently have done.

Lucian. I would never dare to show my face again, if I had taken even a pin.

Flora (*emptying her pockets.*) See, my Lady, I have nothing.

The Countess. My dear children, I have already told you I am far from thinking any of you have them, when you say you have not. They are certainly of no great value; yet I cannot but confess their loss affects me.

Harry. Were they only worth a straw, they were your Ladyship's, and should not now be missing. But you know there are such things as servants, and they are not always honest. 'Tis not the first time we have suspected them at home.

Julia. But 'tis the first time any thing of the kind has happened in our house, I assure you, Master Harry.

Augustus. I would answer for our servants, men and women.

The Countess. I have trusted them this

long time ; but if you, Sir, (*to Harry*) have made any observations, I request you'd let me know them.

Harry. Oh, no, no ! But when we went into the garden, did not what's her name, the house-maid, enter ?

The Countess. Rachel ! oh, I don't fear her. These six years past that I have had her, she might easily have made away with things of value, had she been dishonest.

Harry. Did not your old footman come in likewise ? I don't like his looks.

The Countess. Fie, Sir ! What makes you thus suspect the honest Adam ? He was my father-in-law's confidential servant, and has been much longer in the family than I myself.

Harry. 'Tis not unlikely, then, that some one may have got into the room when we were gone.

The Countess. That's not at all unlikely ; and I am going to inquire. Amuse yourselves till I come back.

Harry. No, Madam, after what has passed, I cannot stay any longer here. Augustus, can you tell me where they have put my hat ?

The Countess. I can't let you possibly go home on foot. You wou'd have upwards of three miles to walk. Stay here till I return; I wont detain you long. You know your papa means to come and fetch you in the carriage. *(Exit.)*

Harry. I'm very much astonished your mamma should have such thoughts of us! We steal her counters!

Julia. Neither has she such a thought. She might have fancied we had put them, without thought, into our pockets. But, as you say, *steal*, she did not think of such a word, or any like it.

Harry. Had there been none here but tradesmen's children, she might well have entertained suspicions; but should make some difference now.

Gabriel. You speak of us, Sir, I can see. Your looks inform me so; but let me tell you, in my turn, that 'tis one's way of living, and not birth, one should be proud of, if they are proud at all.

Harry. How these tradesmen talk about their way of living. You are very happy there are so few children hereabout, and that Augustus and myself are forced to

make you our companions, or have no diversion. Did you live in London, you would not have such an honour, notwithstanding your fine way of living.

Augustus. Speak, Sir, for yourself alone: for just as here, in London too, I should be proud to entertain my little friends.

Julia. Yes, certainly, they give us, to the full, as good examples, as such whipper-snapper noblemen as you.

Eliza. This, brother, you have deserved. Why first attack them?

Harry. And you, too, upon me? You think certainly as I do, though you won't confess you do. Have you forgot mamma's instruction on the subject of familiarity with those beneath us? "Never mix with tradesmen's children; in the lower ranks of life you'll always have low thoughts."

Augustus. And can you possibly suspect my friends of being thieves?

Gabriel. Did we approach the table?

Flora. No; whereas we saw you take the counters, and look at them half a dozen times. (*Harry aims to strike her.*)

Augustus. Softly! you'll have me to deal with else.

Gabriel. No, no, my friend, I thank you, but I can take care of my sister.

Harry. O 'tis far beneath me to dispute with traders.

Julia. Very well ; I hope then it is beneath you likewise to attack a little girl.

Harry. I sha'nt permit her to insult me.

Eliza. She certainly would have done much better, had she held her tongue.

Julia. But being such a child, she might be pardoned ; and particularly when she spoke the truth.

Harry. The truth ?

Gabriel. Yes, if you understood that word. She said you took the counters and looked at them, and this certainly was true.

Harry. I sha'nt even condescend to answer you.

Gabriel. You can't take a better resolution, when you have nothing but such answers for us.

By this time the Countess returns, and invites them into an adjoining room, where Adam is prepared for his experiment. Adam introduces a cock, which, he tells them is a conjurer. He sets down the

basket on the table, and lifts up a napkin which was covered over it, so that Flora and the rest discerned the creature's neck and crest, informing them, that if a single straw is missing, he need only consult this bird, and he will be sure to know who stole it. Adam now closes in all the windows—all is darkness. He now addresses them as follows: If any one is guilty of stealing the counters, let him go out—What, all remain! Come, then, Gentlemen and Ladies, and let every one of you in turn, lift up the napkin here, and with his right hand, d'ye see, stroke Chanticlear upon his back, you will hear his music the moment the thief lays his hand upon him; but don't lift the cloth too high; just so as to let your hand pass under it.

They all severally comply with the command, each exclaiming, "It is not I; the cock don't speak"—Harry declaring he had stroked him more than the rest, and he did not even speak for him. Adam places the company in a row, with their right hands behind them, as each passes the table. The whole company now having passed the trial, a general laugh, in which the

Countess joins, is directed against poor Adam and the conjurer.—I must acknowledge this confounds me, says Adam. However, have patience for a little while don't stir; be sure to stand still. There must be something wrong, I'll go fetch a candle.—Harry knew what all this stupid nonsense would come to. Flora suspected the cock was no wiser than his master. Adam, returning with the light, goes up to Flora: "Come, Miss, let me see your right hand" She holds out her right hand. All are greatly surprised to find it as black as a coal. "Don't be frightened, little Miss, I'll soon make it white again." The children have no patience, but look all together at their hands, and instantly cry out, "How black are my fingers too!" After much surprise, and many remarks having been made on this phænomenon, Harry lifts up his hand in triumph, exclaiming, "But see mine! there's none but I have got a hand that's fit to look at." "Very likely!" says Adam, taking hold of Harry by the collar, "'tis then *you* have stole the counters! Give them up, young gentleman, this instant, or I'll search your pockets, and then black you all over."

Harry (turning pale and trembling.) Is it possible I should have put them in my pocket, and not thought of what I was about? I recollect, indeed, I had them in my hand! Dear me! they're here indeed, in a corner of my pocket! Who would have thought it?"—He begins to invent excuses—it was done without consideration—he is charged with not having touched the cock—he declares he *did* stroke it.

Countess. " You *did*; is that then your assertion? Don't you see, that if you had; you would have blacked your hands, as all the others, Adam having smeared him over with a certain composition. Your companions were not the least afraid to stroke him, as their conscience did not any way reproach them for the theft; but as for you, the apprehension you were under, that the servant's artifice might really be conjuration, awed you; and the means you pitched on to avoid detection have betrayed you. You thought yourself very *politic*, no doubt, in *pretending* only, as you did, to stroke the cock—but **HONESTY** you would have found much better **POLICY**!"

Being thus pinned down by the evidence against him, he confesses the crime.

ELDEST BOY.

What a pretty figure the little nobleman makes in this history ! Let us charitably hope there are not *many* children educated in this crooked way. What a depraved mind is here described ! What pride ! What meanness !—Surely it would be more desirable to be brought up in the poorest cottage, and afterwards to work hard at some low trade, and earn one's bread by their daily labour, rather than be a spoil'd child in high life, and afterwards a little nobleman turned loose into society to sow the seeds of discord.

We have seen the vice of insincerity painted in such odious colours, that if our hearts had not been already set against it, the picture alone would have been enough to have fixed in us an hatred of the original.

I believe we must close the business of the evening ; for to-morrow we have a long, and seemingly, interesting portion : let us meet early.

THE FIFTH EVENING.

ELDEST BOY.

THE subject for the present evening is a serious one, and well deserves our earnest consideration. It opens I perceive, in the manner of a sermon, I must therefore request that silence may be preserved ; and, that such of you as are old enough to understand, will listen, with the strictest attention, to a short discourse

ON THE CHOICE OF COMPANIONS.

THE FIFTH EVENING's READING.

“Evil communications corrupt good manners.”

Doubtless all people suffer from such communication ; but, above all, the minds of youth suffer, which are yet unformed,

unprincipled, unfurnished, and ready to receive any impression.

Before we consider the danger of bad company, let us see the meaning of the phrase.

In the language of the world, *good company* means *fashionable people*; their stations in life, not their morals, are considered. I should wish you to fix another meaning to the expression, to consider all company in which vice is found, be their station what it will, as bad company.

The three following classes will perhaps include the greatest part of those who deserve the appellation.

First, those who endeavour to destroy the principles of Christianity; who jest upon scripture, talk blasphemy, and treat revelation with contempt.

A second class, those who have a tendency to destroy in us the principles of common honesty and integrity. Under this head we may rank gamesters of every denomination, and the infamous characters of every profession.

A third class, and such as are commonly most dangerous to youth, includes the

long catalogue of men of pleasure. In whatever way they follow the call of appetite, they have equally a tendency to corrupt the purity of the mind. Besides these three classes, whom we may call *bad company*, there are others who come under the denomination of *ill-chosen company*; trifling, insipid characters of every kind, who follow no business, are led by no ideas of improvement, but spend their time in dissipation and folly; whose highest praise it is, that they are not vicious. With none of these a serious youth would wish to associate.

The danger of keeping bad company, arises, principally, from our aptness to imitate and catch the manners and sentiments of others; from the power of custom; and from our own bad inclinations.

In our earliest youth, the contagion of manners is observable. In a child we easily discover, from his first actions, and rude attempts at language, the kind of persons to whose care he has been committed: we see the early spring of a civilized education, or the first wild shoots of rusticity. In childhood and youth, we

naturally adopt the sentiments of those about us.

Habit, which is intended for our good, may, like other kind appointments of nature, be converted into a mischief. The well-disposed youth, entering first into bad company, is shocked at what he hears and what he sees. The good principles he has imbibed, ring in his ears an alarming lesson against the wickedness of his companions. But, alas! this sensibility is but of short continuance. The horrid picture is now more easily endured,

“ Vice is a creature of so horrid mien,
As to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar to her face,
We first endure—then pity—then embrace.”

Virtue is soon thought a severe rule; the gospel an inconvenient restraint; a few pangs of conscience now and then interrupt his pleasures, and whisper to him that he once had better thoughts: but even these die away; and he who at first was shocked even at the appearance of vice, is formed by custom into a profligate leader of vicious pleasures.

Our bad inclinations form another argument against bad company. We have so many bad propensities of different kinds to watch, that, amidst such a variety of enemies within, we ought at least to be on our guard against those without. It is therefore the part of inexperienced youth, surely, to keep out of the way of temptation, and to give bad inclinations as little room as possible to acquire strength.

It is very true, and a lamentable fact; in the history of human nature, that bad men take more pains to corrupt their own species, than virtuous men do to reform them.

I shall now proceed to a short story, which applies to our subject, and is adapted to the understandings of the younger part of my readers.

This story has never before appeared in print; it is well worth your attention, and I hope you will none of you lose a word of it.

STORY OF MASTER TRUEMAN.

MASTER TRUEMAN was the son of a respectable tradesman, who lived at a small distance from the metropolis. He

was an only child ; and his parents, who were very conscientious people, and possessed considerable property, were, as it may be supposed, extremely anxious for the welfare of this boy. He went to a school in the neighbourhood, the master of which was an elderly clergyman, a very pious man, and in all respects, an exemplary character. This boy, whom we shall now distinguish by the name of Edmund, possessed a good natural understanding, was a dutiful and affectionate child ; and by his general good conduct, had rendered himself the delight of his parents' hearts.

During the school hours he was always attentive to his business, and seldom returned home without some peculiar marks of approbation, having been bestowed on him by his master.

His evenings used to be spent in preparing his talk for the morning, in reading some useful and amusing book, in drawing, or some other rational employment, during the Winter. And in the Summer he would walk in the fields with his father and mother, and sometimes

perhaps a neighbour ; and though only ten years of age, he would speak of the beauties of nature, and attempt to trace the finger of God in all that presented itself to his view, with so much good sense, that he at once delighted and astonished those who heard him.

There happened to be in this school (which consisted of only twelve boys,) two or three youths, who did not exactly walk in Edmund's steps ; but then they were adepts at every sport and pastime which came in with the different seasons.— Though they were perpetually turned back at their lessons, and could not be taught to join two letters decently together with their pen, yet none were more expert in flying a kite, playing at shoe and ball, skipping through the rope, and so forth, in the summer ; or at skating, sliding, throwing snow-balls, and such sort of sports, in the winter. These were very *alluring* qualifications, and they were in themselves harmless ; but unhappily here they served to cover a very bad disposition. Those boys were constantly playing the truant, robbing gardens, and one of them,

Richard Humphreys, in particular, had been detected more than once in such acts as stealing the boys' knives and books, and felling them; but this was not generally known in the school. In short, some of them were continually under punishment for one crime or other; but then, when school was over, they had so many seducing ways, and could make themselves so very agreeable, that it was scarcely possible for any one to avoid their society, and from joining in those sports wherein they so greatly excelled, particularly one whose heart was good, who meant only to partake of such sports as were innocent, and even those only at proper times.

One morning as Edmund was trudging to school in the usual way, he was met by Richard Humphreys, who joined him, and turned back part of the way with him. "A fine morning, Master Edmund," says Dick; "you are going to school, I perceive." Edmund answered in the affirmative. "For my part, I am going to a village hard by; there is a mountebank to exhibit, and they speak very highly of the merry Andrew, who, they say, is the most

witty fellow, and has the cleverest tricks of any one that ever appeared upon a stage."

"I should like very well to see him," says Edmund; "if it had happened to have been a holiday, I would have asked my father's permission to go and see him."

"Besides," adds Richard, "I have got a shilling in my pocket, and I know of a boy who won a silver watch the other day by putting a shilling into the mountebank's lottery, where they say there are not any blanks. I intend to try my luck to-day."

"I should like to go" says Edmund, "but it would be a sin and a shame to neglect school; besides I should be too late, was I to go back to ask leave." "Why, truly," replies Richard, "it would be a shameful thing indeed to miss school *often* in this way, but a *time by chance*—it is only two hours—I think there can be no very great harm in doing this *for once* in one's life. We can soon make up; by a little extraordinary application, for the loss of two hours, and we shall be back by the dinner-hour, so that no one need know any thing of the matter; one may easily

invent some excuse to the master, and then all is over."

At this time who should come up but Tom Laurence and Billy Bentill, two intimate friends of Richard's; (for this, you must know, was a concerted plan)—these boys had long been disgusted by the attention of the master to Edmund, and his ill-treatment, as they termed it, of them; they were determined to bring matters a little on a level, not by mending their own ways, and copying Edmund's conduct, which in their hearts they could not help approving, but by endeavouring to pervert his steps, and, by entangling him in their baseness, bring him, by degrees, to be as infamous as themselves. This is very common with bad children; as it is much easier for an artful lad to make a well-disposed boy as bad as himself, provided he associates much with them, than it is for him to wean himself from all his vicious habits, and, by constant imitation, bring himself to be as good as he found his companion; this is often attended with a great deal of trouble, and requires much perseverance. But to go on with the story. Tom and

Billy coming up, one of them, addressing Dick Humphreys, asked what he was about loitering there; every body was gone! they should be too late if they did not run: for their parts, they would not be too late for all the world. “Come, Edmund,” says Richard, “’tis but for once, let us take a run with them; you would never forgive yourself, if you were to miss the fight, and this is the last time of performing.” Here was not one moment left for reflection—now or never:—Edward’s heart throbbed with the desire of seeing this scene of mirth and jollity; away they run together, nor do they relax their pace until they reach the village. This was an unlucky meeting, indeed, to poor Edmund. As they stood laughing at the Merry Andrew and his jokes, Richard pretended to be greatly concerned all of a sudden. At length he exclaims, “Alas! alas! I have lost my shilling; I put it into my waistcoat pocket to be ready, and, in the violence of running, it has flown out. [*The truth is, he had no shilling to lose.*] If you, master Edmund, would be so kind as lend me one, I will promise you part of what I shall gain

by it." "Aye," say the other lads, "and if you will lend each of us one, we will do the same." "I have only two shillings in my pocket," says Edmund, "which I was taking to school for my contribution towards coals for our fire. [*Here a sad thought glanced across his mind.*] I will venture to lend you one of them, Richard, and the other to your friends; but the only condition I make is, that you will pay the money again, that it may be appropriated to the purpose for which I received it." These terms were readily acceded to, and the tickets were purchased. Now, big with expectation and hope, the three adventurers lost all relish for the jokes of the fool; anxiety for the fate of their tickets took entire possession of them. Edmund continued to be amused for a little time, when the tickets were both declared to be *blanks*; the Merry Andrew at the same time assuring them, that the two packets were worth their weight in gold; these, however, they soon found were of no more value than a small quantity of brick-dust. The money was gone! the time was gone! and never was more solemnity seen than

in a sad procession of the four sorrowful lads, from the scene of mirth, to the place of retribution.

In order to screen the proceedings of the morning, it now became necessary, as they thought, to invent as many lies and false excuses as might be deemed expedient to effect that purpose. This, in their walk home, they contrived by the assistance of Richard, who was an adept in this sort of business, the affair was so artfully managed, that no part of the transaction was brought to light.

When the evening came, Edmund was observed not to be so cheerful as usual ; his parents were uneasy, and thought he could not possibly be well, as he had always been the life of their little society, till the hour of his retiring. He complained of a slight head-ach, though, if he had given his disorder the right name, he would have called it the *heart-ache* ; for truly he suffered much remorse. He went soon to bed, but not to sleep ; his heart smote him for his past misconduct ; he felt himself debased ; and could not find a place where his head would rest easy, all the night.

He arose early next day ; the morning was clear and fine ; the air was fresh and bracing ; his spirits revived ; he went to school ; all passed smoothly on, and he began to think more lightly of the excursion to the neighbouring village. The fact is, he had been tempted to set his foot over the boundary line of discretion ; the act had passed off unnoticed, and it is ten to one, but on the next temptation, the other foot will follow. It was not long, indeed, before this happened. There came a very hard frost, and the river, which they frequently touched upon in their road to school was frozen over, so that people might, with discretion, walk over it with a tolerable degree of safety. As Edmund set off to school one morning, Mr. True-man said to him, " My dear Edmund, you will oblige me, by not going upon the ice in your way to school ; so many accidents happen from boys venturing without a guide, that I shall really be quite unhappy until I have your promise, that you will avoid it. To-morrow, you know, is a holiday, and you shall go and walk there with me ; if the frost continue, as it is

likely to do, we may then more safely venture. Edmund promised he would not come near the ice; and with this resolution he set off to school. There was a sudden bend in the river, which brought it so near the foot path across the lawn, that it gave you a full view of it to a great extent.

It was a fine winter's morning: the sun shone on the ice, and exhibited a number of people who were skating upon the river, in a part where the water was known to be shallow. Here bonfires were made on the ice, hot ale and cakes were seen in various situations; some persons were sliding, others engaged in various sports; all seemed gay, all were delighted. At this unlucky moment, with a fine sweep of their skates, up came Richard Humphreys and his two companions. Edmund had never had a pair of skates on; it was beautiful to see people skate, they did it with so much ease, and some so gracefully. "Try mine on," says Humphreys; "you are very welcome; I'm sure you'll soon learn." "I should not be able to stand up in them, I fear; besides, I would not be seen upon the ice just at this time; I

have a reason for it." "O, if that be all, come along with me, I'll conduct you to a place where there will be nobody but ourselves." So far Humphreys said right; for in that place the water was so very deep, that no prudent person, in the present state of the frost, would venture upon it. Edmund suffered himself once more to be enticed by this artful companion. Humphreys took off his skates, and having arrived at the solitary place of appointment, fixed them upon Edmund's feet, and led him about, till he could stand upright alone, and soon after move along from place to place. He had however no power of directing himself with certainty, but was run away with, first in one direction, then in another, whilst Humphreys was sliding backwards and forwards on the place where Edmund had set off. An unlucky turn at length carried him to a hole which had been broken open for the purpose of getting water; down he fell into the deep hole! His right arm caught the edge of the ice, and had any one been near, they might have dragged him out. He cried out most lamentably! Humphreys

discovers his situation. "Aye, very likely," says he to himself, "shall I go to expose my life, and afterwards get nothing but abuse from his friends? not I, I'll run off; find him out that can, mum's the word for me." Away he ran! leaving his companion, the unhappy victim of his own credulity. If Humpreys had gone and called for assistance, the youth might yet have been saved; but that was not for his purpose, he was determined not to be seen in the busines.

Mr. Aimworth, the schoolmaster, however, not reconciled to Edmund's absenting himself from his duty a second time, sent to know the cause of his absence. Mr. Trueman, greatly alarmed at this message, ran out, half distracted; the ice immediately occurred to him, and he knew not how far the temptation might have proved resistible; his fears, alas! were too well grounded. Master Edmund had not been seen by any one on the river; no body could give any account of him. A decent, elderly farmer happened to be looking about his concerns in the fold-yard, and him they questioned.

This farmer had seen two boys at a little distance, running towards the river down below ; one of them appeared to have a pair of skates in his hands, but his eyesight was not very good, he could not conjecture what boys they might be. But seeing the affliction of Mr. Trueman, and the extreme concern of the messenger, for every body loved little Edmund, he offered to go with them in search of this ill-fated



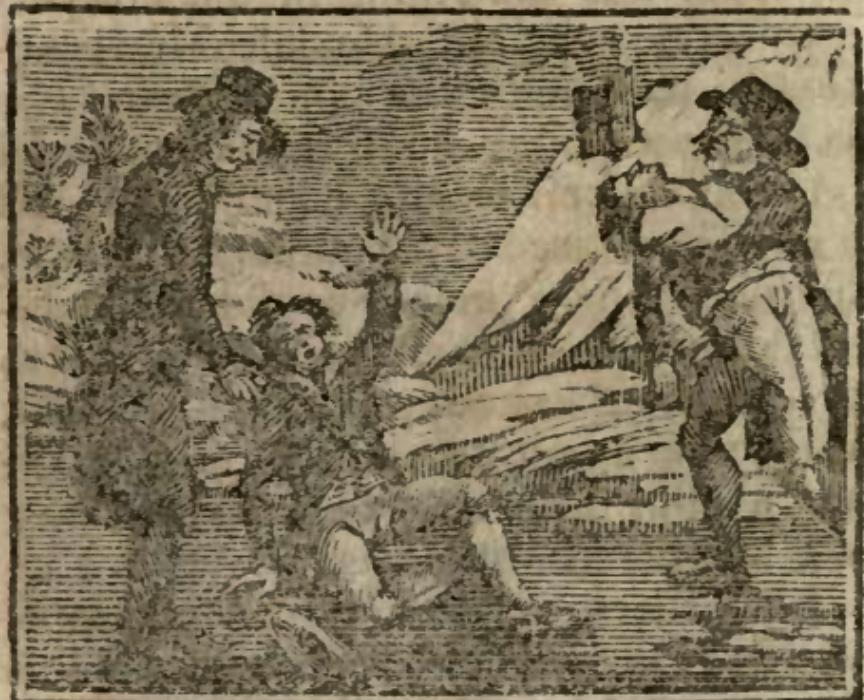
little boy. They came at length to the dreadful spot ; here were footsteps of two people to be traced on the snow, (which

had not been swept away for reasons before mentioned,) and the irregular marks of a pair of skates were also traced to the broken part of the ice. The father's heart now sunk within him—he had lost his all!—his only hope, his darling child was lost! was gone for ever!—his senses forsook him—he fell down upon the ice.

Farmer Heartwell, for that was the good old man's name, was struck by the appearance of something he did not perfectly comprehend. He left Mr True-man to the care of the young man who accompanied him, whilst he endeavoured to account for a cavity which appeared to have been recently made in the hedge, also for the snow being considerably disturbed on that side of the hole next to the hedge. He goes to the other side, into a close adjoining the river. The father at this time recovers, and as they raise him up from the ice, he hears Farmer Heartwell cry out, with a transport little short of madness, “ He's here! I've found him! I have him! ”

But oh! What language can describe the scene, when he bears young Edmund

to his father's arms ! pale, and shivering indeed, but, evidently, in a state of recovery. A Newfoundland dog belonging to a gentleman in the neighbourhood came up to them shaking his tail ; it seems he had been strolling that way, and coming near to the scene of distress, seized Edmund by the arm, just as he was sinking, and drew him, nearly exhausted, out of the water.



The sequel of my history is as follows : Edmund is taken home, and soon re-

covers ; this check which he has received from the arm of Divine Providence, opens his eyes fully to the danger of bad company ; he repents, reforms, and is forgiven. Humphreys is charged with tempting him to go upon the ice ; he denies the charge, and says he was not on the ice that day. Farmer Heartwell observes that the left foot of one of the persons who had been there, from the impressions left on the thin snow which covered the ice, was turned inwards, and exactly answered to a deformity in that of Humphreys ! besides, the skates which Edmund had on were marked R. H. He is proved guilty ; and, continuing in his bad habits, (for he never would confess his fault, nor acknowledge the truth, but, in spite of all remonstrance, went on from crime to crime,) he was at length shunned and avoided by all who were not as base as himself.

I shall forbear making any comments on this little story. It is brought here to show you the dreadful consequences which may arise from associating with wicked companions ; and I hope it has placed the

danger so full to your view, that you will not “ walk in the way of the evil man,” but “ avoid it ; pass not by it ; turn from “ it, and pass away.”

ELDEST BOY.

I never read any thing which left a stronger impression upon my mind than the subjects of this evening. O, my little friends and brothers, never let them be forgotten. At present, indeed, we are protected from bad company, we do not mix even with the *little world*, but live in our own select society ; the time may come, when we must issue forth into the *great world* ; let us remember that the enemy of mankind is constantly going about, assuming every shape to allure and snare the virtuous ; and we see plainly, that the best of us may fall into his hands, if we are not as constantly on our guard.

THE SIXTH EVENING.

ELDEST BOY.

WELCOME once more, my little friends, to the enjoyment of the retired fire-side, and rational amusement.

We open the business of the night with another serious subject,

THE EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.



You are here presented with the figure of an old man, fleeting along upon wings, bearing an hour-glass in one hand, and a

scythe in the other. This old gentleman holds his glass up to us, I suppose, to remind us, that as swiftly as he flies, so swiftly is the sand of the hour-glass of our lives passing away ; and the scythe seems to denote, that he means to mow us all down, before he has done with us. A few scattered ruins which appear behind him, show what devastation he makes ; and the darkness which surrounds him, intimates to us, that he can travel as fast by night as by day. What is to be done with this formidable personage ? Let us take him by the forelock ; if we cannot check him in his career, we will at least make him useful to us, as we fly along with him.

" Arrest the present moments ;
For be assur'd they all are arrant tell tales ;
And though their flight be silent, and their path
Trackless, as the wing'd couriers of the air,
They post to Heav'n, and there record our folly."

THE SIXTH EVENING's READING.

ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF TIME,
Its Use and Value.

Nothing is more common, than to hear people complain of the shortness of Time; and yet how much more have most of us than we make a proper use of, and many of us than we know how to use at all. “Our lives,” says Seneca, “are spent either in doing nothing at all, or doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them.”

Yet as fast as our time runs, we should be very glad, in many parts of our lives, that it ran much faster than it does. This seems extraordinary, when we consider, that, notwithstanding the *business* of life, there are so many amusements to fill up the spaces of time. The mind, indeed, cannot be always intent on serious application; it is necessary therefore, to find out proper employments for it in its relaxations. “I must confess I think it is below reasonable creatures to be altogether

conversant in such diversions as are merely innocent, and have nothing else to recommend them but that there is no hurt in them. It is wonderful to see persons of the best sense passing away a dozen hours together in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few game phrases, and no other ideas, but those of black or red spots, ranged together in different figures." Thus putting themselves on the level, or perhaps suffering themselves to be overcome by men of the weakest understandings : for it is remarkable, however obtruse the science of card-playing may seem, persons of the meanest capacity have been known to excel in it. Would not one laugh to hear people of this species complain of the shortness of life, whilst they are calling to their aid, cards,

" With all the tricks
That idleness has ever yet contriv'd
To fill the void of an unfurnish'd brain,
To palliate Dulness, and give Time a shove."

The mind never unbends itself so agreeably as in the conversation of a well-chosen friend ; this eases and unloads it ; clears

and improves the understanding; engenders thought and knowledge; and animates virtue and good resolution.

There are many useful amusements of life which one would endeavour to multiply, that one might always have recourse to something, rather than suffer the mind to lie idle, or run adrift with any passion that chances to rise in it.

A person who has a taste in music, painting, or architecture, is like one that has another sense, when compared with such as have no relish for those arts. The florist, the planter, the gardener, the husbandman, the turner, or he that employs himself at the anvil, when these are only as accomplishments to the man of fortune, are great reliefs to a country life, and many ways useful to those who are possessed of them.

“ How various his employments whom the world
Calls idle, and who justly, in return,
Esteems that busy world an idler too!
Friends, books, a garden, and perhaps a pen,
Delightful industry enjoy’d at home,
And nature in her cultivated trim
Dress’d to his taste, inviting him abroad.”

‘ But, inasmuch as it behoveth persons in every situation of life to consider that they

were not created to live for themselves alone, they should "take care to keep their conscience peculiarly alive to the unapparent, though formidable perils of unprofitableness."

It is necessary to habituate our minds, in our younger years, to some employment which may engage our thoughts, and fill the capacity of the soul at a riper age. For, however we may roam in youth from folly to folly, too volatile for rest, too soft and effeminate for industry, ever ambitious to make a splendid figure, yet the time will come when we shall outgrow the relish of childish amusements ; and, if we are not provided with a taste for manly satisfactions to succeed in their room, we must of course become miserable, at an age more difficult to be pleased.

Frivolous excuses for not attending to serious employments, are whimsically imagined by Mrs. Chapone, who supposing a modern lady of fashion to be called to account for the disposition of her time, makes her defence run thus:

" I can't, you know, be out of the world, nor act differently from every body in it. The hours are every where

late, consequently I rise late. I have scarce breakfasted before morning visits begin, or 'tis time to go to an auction, or a concert, or to take a little exercise for my health. Dressing my hair is a long operation, but one can't appear with a head unlike every body else. One must sometimes go to a play or an opera, though I own it hurries one to death. Then what with indispensable visits, the perpetual engagements to card-parties at private houses, and attendance on public assemblies, to which all people of fashion subscribe, the evenings, you see, are fully disposed of. What time, then, can I possibly have for what you call domestic duties? You talk of the offices and employments of friendship—alas! I have no hours left for friends! I must see them in a crowd, or not at all. As to cultivating the friendship of my husband, we are very civil when we meet, but we are both too much engaged to spend much time with each other. With regard to my daughters, I have given them a French governess, and proper masters, I can do no more for them. You tell me I should instruct my servants, but I have no time to inform myself, much less can

I undertake any thing of that sort for them, or even be able to guess what they do with themselves the greater part of the twenty-four hours. I go to church, if possible, once on a Sunday, and then some of my servants attend me ; and if they will not mind what the preacher says, how can I help it ? The management of our fortune, as far as I am concerned, I must leave to the steward and housekeeper ; for I find I can barely snatch a quarter of an hour just to look over the bill of fare when I am to have company, that they may not send up any thing frightful or old-fashioned. As to the Christian duty of charity, I assure you I am not ill-natured ; and (considering that the great expense of being always dress'd for company, with losses at cards, subscriptions, and public spectacles, leave me very little to dispose of,) I am ready enough to give my money when I meet with a miserable object. You say I should inquire out such, inform myself thoroughly of their cases, make an acquaintance with the poor in my neighbourhood in the country, and plan out the best methods of relieving the unfortunate, and assisting the industrious, but this

supposes much more time, and much more money, than I have to bestow. I have had hopes, indeed, that my summers would have afforded me more leisure, but we stay pretty late in town, then we generally pass several weeks at one or other of the water-drinking places, where every moment is spent in public; and, for the few months in which we reside at our own seat, our house is always full with a succession of company, to whose amusement one is obliged to dedicate every hour of the day."

THE READING CONTINUED.

I have here given you a specimen of a life spent in unprofitable toil and unsatisfying pleasures. No pleasures are satisfying, or worthy of a rational being, but such as are consistent with religion and virtue. I will here give you, from the same author, an account of a family whose manner of living differs considerably from that of the lady you have just been reading about.

"Sir Charles and Lady Worthy are neither gloomy ascetics, nor frantic en-

thusiasts ; they married from affection, on long acquaintance and perfect esteem ; they therefore enjoy the best pleasures of the heart in the highest degree. They concur in a rational scheme of life, which, whilst it makes them always cheerful and happy, renders them the friends of human kind, and the blessing of all around them. They do not desert their station in the world, nor deny themselves the proper and moderate use of their large fortune ; though that portion of it which is appropriated to the use of others, is that from which they derive their highest gratifications. They spend four or five months every year in London, where they keep up an intercourse of hospitality and civility with many of the most respectable persons of their own or of higher rank : but they have endeavoured rather at a *select* than a numerous acquaintance ; and as they never play cards, this endeavour has the more easily succeeded. Three days in the week, from the hour of dinner, are given up to this intercourse with what may be called the world. Three more are spent in a family way, with a few intimate friends, whose tastes are conformable to

their own, and with whom the book and working-table, or sometimes music, supply the intervals of useful and agreeable conversation. In these parties their children are always present, and partake of the improvement that arises from the well-chosen pieces which are read aloud. The seventh day is always spent at home, after the due attendance on public worship ; and it is peculiarly appropriated to the religious instruction of their children and servants, or to other works of charity. As they keep regular hours, and rise early, and as Lady Worthy never pays or admits morning visits, they have seven or eight hours in every day free from all interruptions from the world, in which the cultivation of their own minds, and those of their children, the due attention to health, to economy, and to the poor, are carried on in the most regular manner.

vi. Thus, even in London, they contrive, without the appearance of quarrelling with the world, or of shutting themselves up from it, to pass the greater part of their time in a reasonable and useful, as well as an agreeable manner. The rest of the

year they spend at their family-seat in the country, where the happy effects of their example, and of their assiduous attention to the good of all around them, are still more observable than in town. Their neighbours, their tenants, and the poor for many miles about them, find in them a sure resource and comfort in calamity, and a ready assistance in every scheme of honest industry. The young are instructed at their expense, and under their direction, and rendered useful at the earliest period possible; the aged and the sick have every comfort administered that their state requires; the idle and dissolute are kept in awe by vigilant inspection; the quarrelsome are brought, by a sense of their own interest, to live more quietly with their family and neighbours, and amicably to refer their disputes to Sir Charles's decision.

“ This amiable pair are not less highly prized by the genteel families of their neighbourhood, who are sure of finding in their house the most polite and cheerful hospitality, and in them a fund of good sense and good humour, with a constant disposition to promote every innocent plea-

sure. They are particularly the delight of all the young people, who consider them as their patrons and their oracles, to whom they always apply for advice and assistance in any kind of distress, or in any scheme of amusement.

“ Sir Charles and Lady Worthy are seldom without some friends in the house with them during their stay in the country ; but, as their methods are known, they are never broken in upon by their guests, who do not expect to see them till dinner-time, except at the hour of prayer, and at breakfast. In their private walks or rides, they usually visit the cottages of the labouring poor, with all of whom they are personally acquainted ; and by the sweetness and friendliness of their manner, as well as by their beneficent actions they so entirely possess the hearts of these people, that they are made confidants of all their family grievances, and the casuists to settle all their scruples of conscience or difficulties in conduct. By this method of conversing freely with them, they find out their different characters and capacities, and often discover and

apply to their own benefit, as well as that of the person they distinguish, talents which would otherwise have been for ever lost to the public."

What a charming description of well-regulated life do we find here! What tranquillity, what true enjoyment in the "best pleasures of friendship, of parental and family affection, of divine beneficence, and a piety which chiefly consists in joyful acts of love and praise!"

ELDEST BOY.

We must remember, my young friends, that to-morrow is the Sabbath-day; let us retire early, that we may rise betimes, and attend to the duties of that holy day.

Early in the morning we meet, if Heaven so will, and prepare our minds for public worship; and when the night comes, if our usual Sunday evening's avocations allow us time, we will go forward with our little book, as I see it concludes with the subject of

RELIGION.

THE SEVENTH EVENING.

MY YOUNGEST SON / —
ELDEST BOY.

“ Come learn the way ;
Wouldst thou have a pleasant evening,
Spend well the day.”

I hope this, and every evening of our lives, will enable us to bear testimony to the truth of this axiom,

THE SEVENTH EVENING’s READING.

My young friends, the seventh portion of reading is intended, if time and occasions permit, for a Sunday’s evening. We must, therefore, confine ourselves to subjects suitable to the evening of that day which we are commanded, from the highest authority, *to keep holy*.

The subjects I fix on, then, for this night’s reading are these: The duty of public worship—The efficacy of prayer—And the necessity of forming religious principles at an early age.

PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD.

“ It is evident both from reason and scripture, that public worship is a most useful and indispensable duty. It is equally evident, that if this duty is to be performed, some fixed and stated *time* for the performing it is absolutely necessary; for without this, it is impossible that any number of persons can ever be collected together in one place. Now one day in seven seems to be as proper and convenient a portion of our time to be allotted to this use, as any other that can be named. The returns of it are frequent enough to keep alive the sense of religion in our hearts, and distant enough to leave a very sufficient interval for our worldly concerns.

If then this time was fixed only by the laws, or even by the customs of our country, it would be our duty and our wisdom to comply with it. Considering it merely as an *ancient usage*, yet, if antiquity can render an usage venerable, this must be of all others the *most* venerable, for it is coeval with the world itself. But it had, more

ever, the sanction of a divine command, From the very beginning of time, God blessed and sanctified the seventh day to the purposes of religion*. That injunction was again repeated to the Jews, in the most solemn manner, at the promulgation of their law from Mount Sinai †, and once more urged upon them by Moses, “ Keep the Sabbath-day, to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee ‡.”

After our Lord’s resurrection, the *first* day of the week was, in memory of that great event, substituted in the room of the *seventh*; and from that time to the present, that is, for almost eighteen hundred years, it has been constantly set apart for the public worship of God by the whole Christian world; and, whatever difference of opinion there may have been in other respects, in this all parties, sects, and denominations of Christians have universally

* Gen. ii. 3.

† Exod. xx. 8, 9, 10, 11.

‡ Deut. v. 12.

and invariably agreed. By these means it comes to pass, that on this day many *millions of people*, are at one and the same time, engaged in prostrating themselves before the throne of Grace, and offering up their sacrifice of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to the common Lord of all, “in whom they live, and move, and have their being.”

There is in this view of the Lord’s day, something so wonderfully awful and magnificent, that one would think it almost impossible for any man to resist the inclination he must find in himself to join in this general assembly of the human race; “to go with the multitude,” as the Psalmist expresses it, “into the house of God,” and to take a part in a solemnity so striking to the imagination, so suitable to the Majesty of Heaven, so adapted to the wants, the necessities, the infirmities, the obligations, and the duties of a created and a dependent being!

The importance of a serious and devout observance of the Lord’s day is most emphatically recommended, in a discourse on

that subje&t, by the present bishop of Lon-don, from whence the above is taken*.

SONG

On the Public Observance of the LORD's DAY.

I.

How glorious 'tis to see the throng
Beneath yon vaulted roof attend;
Whence pious pray'r, and humble song,
On wings of Faith and Hope ascend!

II.

Who would not quit each busy care?
Who would not each vain pleasure spurn?
Who but with joy would hasten there,
And join the praises thus begun?

III.

How doth th' enraptur'd heart expand,
To think that in this blisful hour,
Re-echo'd from each distant land,
An UNIVERSAL PRAYER we pour.

* Sermons on several Subjects, by the Rev. Beilby Porteous, D. D. then Bishop of Chester, (now Bishop of London,) published 1783.

IV.

This *hour*, then, let us all repair
To celebrate our Maker's praise;
O! let our voices fill the air,
And join th' Archangels' choral lays!

F. A.

Since the observance of the Sabbath is founded upon so many wise and just reasons, what have they to answer for, who not only neglect this institution themselves, but bring it by their example into contempt with others? I speak not to those who make it a day of common diversion; who, laying aside all decency, and breaking through all civil and religious regulations, spend it in the most licentious amusements: Such people are past all reproof; but I speak to those who, in other things, profess to be serious people, and who, one would hope, would act right, when they were convinced what was so*.

Having spoken of public worship, let us now say a few words on the use and efficacy of *prayer in general*.

* GILPIN.

There is one motive to this duty, far more constraining than all others that can be named, more imperious than any argument on its utility, than any convictions of its efficacy, even any experience of its consolations. *Prayer is the command of God*; the plain, positive, repeated injunction of the Most High, who declares, “He will be inquired of.” This is enough to secure the obedience of a Christian, even though a promise were not, as it always is, attached to the command. But in this case, to our unspeakable comfort, the promise is as clear as the precept, “Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.” This is encouragement enough for the plain Christian. It is enough for him, that *thus saith the Lord*. When a serious Christian has once got a plain unequivocal command from his Maker on any point, he never suspends his obedience, while he is amusing himself with looking about for subordinate motives of action. Instead of curiously analyzing the nature of the duty, he considers how he shall best fulfil it*.

* HANNAH MORE.

As it is the effect of prayer to *expand* the affections, as well as to *sanctify* them, the benevolent Christian is not satisfied to commend himself alone to the divine favour. The heart which is full of the love of God, will overflow with love to its neighbour. All that are near to himself, he wishes to bring near to God.

Necessity of gaining Habits of Attention and Virtue, and of forming Religious Principles at an early Age.

The great use of knowledge in all its various branches, is to free the mind from the prejudices of ignorance, and to give it juster and more enlarged conceptions, than are the mere growth of rude nature. By reading, you add the experience of others to your own. It is the improvement of the mind chiefly, that makes the difference between man and man ; and gives one man a real superiority over another.

Besides, the mind must be employed. The lower orders of men have their attention much engrossed by those employments, in which the necessities of life engage them; and it is happy that they have. Labour stands in the room of education, and fills up those vacancies of mind which, in a state of idleness, would be engrossed by vice. And if they, who have more leisure, do not substitute something in the room of this, their minds also will become the prey of vice; and the more so, as they have the means to indulge it more in their power. If then the mind must be employed, what can fill up its vacancies more rationally than the acquisition of knowledge? Let us therefore thank God for the opportunities he hath afforded us; and not turn into a curse those means of leisure, which might become so great a blessing. But however necessary knowledge may be, religion, we know, is infinitely more so. The one adorns a man, and gives him, it is true, superiority and rank in life; but the other is absolutely essential to his happiness.

In the midst of youth, health, and abundance, the world is apt to appear a very gay and pleasing scene; it engages our desires; and, in a degree, satisfies them also. But it is wisdom to consider, that a time will come when youth, health, and fortune will fail us; and if disappointment and vexation do not sour our taste for pleasure, at least sickness and infirmities will destroy it. In these gloomy seasons and above all at the approach of death, what will become of us without religion? When this world fails us, where shall we fly, if we expect no refuge in another?

For improvement in knowledge, youth is certainly the fittest season. The mind is then ready to receive any impression. It is free from all that care and attention which, in riper age, the affairs of life bring with them. The memory too is then stronger and better able to acquire the rudiments of knowledge; besides, there is sometimes in youth a modesty and ductility, which in advanced years, if those years especially have been left a prey to ignorance, become self-sufficiency and prejudice; and these effectually bar up all

the inlets to knowledge. But, above all, unless habits of attention and application are early gained, we shall scarce acquire them afterwards. The inconsiderate youth seldom reflects upon this; nor knows his loss, till he knows also that it cannot be retrieved.

Nor is youth more the season to acquire knowledge, than to form religious habits. It is a great point to get *habit* on the side of *virtue*. It will make every thing smooth and easy. The earliest principles are generally the most lasting; and those of a religious cast are seldom wholly lost. Though the temptations of the world may, now and then, draw the well-principled youth aside, yet his principles being continually at war with his practice, there is hope, that in the end the better part may overcome the worse, and bring on a reformation. Whereas, he who has suffered habits of vice to get possession of his youth, has little chance of being brought back to a sense of religion. In a common course of things, it can rarely happen. Some calamity must rouse him. "He must be awakened by a storm, or sleep for ever."

Piety to God is the foundation of good morals; and is a disposition particularly graceful and becoming to youth. To be void of it, argues a cold heart—destitute of some of the best affections which belong to that age. Youth is the season of warm and generous emotions. The heart should then spontaneously rise into the admiration of what is great; glow with the love of what is fair and excellent; and melt at the discovery of tenderness and goodness. Where can an object be found so proper to kindle those affections as the Father of the universe, and the Author of all felicity? Unmoved by veneration, can you contemplate that grandeur and majesty which his works every where display? Untouched by gratitude, can you view that profusion of good, which, in this pleasing season of life, his beneficent hand pours around you? Happy in the love and affection of those with whom you are connected, look up to the Supreme Being, as the inspirer of all the friendship which has ever been shown you by others; himself your best, and your first friend; formerly the supporter

of your infancy, and the guide of your childhood, now the guardian of your youth, and the hope of your coming years.

Do not imagine, that when exhorted to be religious, you are called upon to become more formal and solemn in your manners than others of the same years ; or to erect yourselves into supercilious reprovers of those around you. The spirit of true religion breathes gentleness and affability. It gives a native unaffected ease to the behaviour. It is social, kind, and cheerful ; far removed from that gloomy and illiberal superstition which clouds the brow, sharpens the temper, dejects the spirits, and teaches men to fit themselves for another world, by neglecting the concerns of this. Let your religion, on the contrary, connect preparation for heaven with an honourable discharge of the duties of active life. Of such religion discover, on every proper occasion, that you are not ashamed*!

ELDEST BOY.

I, for one, am not ashamed of such religion, but glory in it.—So do we all.

Youth certainly is the season to acquire knowledge, and to form religious habits. Let us keep this in our minds; by endeavouring to do so, we shall not be the less cheerful. This little book has sufficiently proved to us, that to be good is to be happy. “There is no peace, saith the Lord, for the wicked.”

We have now completed the Seven Evenings’ Readings. The last will, I trust, have represented religion to you in so amiable a light, that you will walk cheerfully in her pleasant ways to the end of a happy life. “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace;” but this is not all; they lead to glory, to everlasting joy.—Now, having spent well the day, the Lord’s Day I mean, let me intreat you to “bring the spirit of the Sunday’s devotion into the transactions of the week,” and let it influence your future lives.

I cannot close this little book without expressing my earnest and best wishes for the welfare of this society, and of all the little societies for whose use it is intended. You have my earnest prayers for your improvement in grace and useful knowledge, for your temporal and eternal happiness: and if the great Disposer of all events shall permit me to be, in some degree, instrumental to your attainment of these blessings, though it should be only in a single instance, I shall ever look back with delight on the hours so devoted to your service.

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59

DUET.

1. In trouble: back straight upon me
2. call: thoughts in the air
3. of my thoughts: for

C

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